



**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR  
BA IN HISTORY OF ART  
2011-12**

<b>1</b>	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	<b>University of Oxford</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Teaching institution</b>	<b>University of Oxford</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	<b>not applicable</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Final award</b>	<b>BA (Hons)</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>History of Art</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>UCAS code</b>	<b>V130</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Relevant Subject Benchmark Statement</b>	<b>History of art, architecture and design 2008</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Date of Programme Specification Preparation</b>	<b>31 March 2004 (updated Apr 2011)</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Educational Aims of the Programme</b>	
<p>The programme aims to enable its students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop an historical understanding of the origins and functions of artefacts within specific world cultures;</li> <li>• provide skills in the critical analysis of images and objects through the cultivation of "visual literacy";</li> <li>• develop skills in research, analysis and writing;</li> <li>• engage and enhance their critical skills, imagination and creativity as an intrinsic part of an intense learning experience;</li> <li>• promote skills of relevance to the continued professional development of art historical activity including visual and verbal skills, which are transferable to a wide range of employment contexts and life experiences.</li> </ul>		

<b>10</b>	<b>Programme Learning Outcomes</b>		
	<i>A</i>	<i>Knowledge and understanding of:</i>	<i>Related teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>the role of images and material objects in the transmission of culture in the past and in the present</b>	The sequence and variety of papers offered are carefully calculated to familiarise students with past and present visual cultures, beginning with the first year core paper “Antiquity after Antiquity” [see item A.2 in <b>section 11</b> ].
	<b>2</b>	<b>how primary evidence can be employed in art-historical argument</b>	The course is supported by world-class collections of primary sources (including the Bodleian Library, Ashmolean Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum, Museum of the History of Science and Christ Church Picture Gallery), which are made available to students, tutors and lecturers with the co-operation of their expert curators, who also partake in the supervision of the preliminary extended essay in the first year and the thesis in the second and third years.
	<b>3</b>	<b>the development of the History of Art as a subject, the changing role of images as evidence of past and present cultures, and the intellectual foundations of the discipline</b>	<p>The first year core paper “Introduction to the History of Art” provides a wide-ranging introduction to existing approaches to visual material, thereby preparing students for subsequent papers. [see item A.1 in <b>section 11</b>]</p> <p>The second year core paper “Approaches to the History of Art” provides an historical overview of the discipline of art history and shows how methodological approaches from a variety of disciplines have been incorporated into the field. [see item B.1 in <b>section 11</b>]</p>
	<b>4</b>	<b>analytical and practical research and writing skills</b>	The first year core paper “Introduction to the History of Art” provides a set of tools to make sense of images and objects, so that students are able to look at and write about them analytically. [see item A.1 in <b>section 11</b> ] The course also gives an insight into the range of collections found in Oxford and into the varieties of expertise available throughout the university. In the second year, the core paper “Approaches to the History of Art” further develops students’ analytical and art-historical writing abilities. [see item B.1 in <b>section 11</b> ] Special classes and workshops to prepare students writing preliminary extended essays in the first year and theses in the second and third years provide additional practical guidance in developing their analytical and practical research and writing skills.

*Assessment:*

*Assessment of the acquisition of these skills is carried out by a variety of methods. Formative assessment occurs through feedback on written and oral presentations in classes and in tutorials.*

*Summative assessment is designed to involve a range of continuous and climactic methods. Many aspects of the required knowledge and understanding are tested through written examinations, held during the course of the third and the ninth terms of the programme. Extensive preparation for the organisation and communication of such knowledge and understanding is provided in both weekly tutorials and termly practice examinations (known as 'collections'). The preliminary extended essay in the first year, the Special Subject extended essay in the third year, and the compulsory thesis during the second and third years provide opportunities for sustained work outside examination settings, for undertaking original independent research and for varying the methods of assessment..*

<b>B</b>	<b>Intellectual skills: the ability to</b>	<i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>exercise critical judgement and undertake sophisticated analysis;</b>	There is an emphasis throughout the course upon developing a critical understanding of the variety of approaches (many of an interdisciplinary nature) that have been and presently are deployed in the study of the history of art. Students' research and analytical skills are explicitly directed at evaluating existing approaches and applying them to both primary and secondary material (visual as well as text-based) in a sustained manner in the research and writing of the thesis in the second and third years. They are also prefigured at a less ambitious level by the first year preliminary extended essay and in a shorter form by the third year Special Subject extended essay. Throughout the course, in tutorials, classes, examinations and assessed pieces of writing, specifically art-historical skills are developed in the verbal and written description, interpretation and historical analysis of visual and textual data, and in the assembling of such data into convincing and sustained narratives.
<b>2</b>	<b>argue persuasively;</b>	Practical rhetorical skills are honed by means of class participation, presentations during group work, discussions of work in single and paired tutorials, and the frequent submission of written work for debate and commentary. The students' oral and written presentations must demonstrate the ability to identify issues and problems, to formulate questions that are susceptible to testing, and to marshal evidence and analysis in a logical and coherent way.
<b>3</b>	<b>approach problems with creativity and imagination;</b>	The successful pursuit of art historical scholarship depends on the creative transformation of sensory impressions into coherent verbal and written descriptions and arguments. It also demands the interpretation of images, objects and texts with sympathy and

		imagination towards past and seemingly alien mentalities or cultures, though in a historically justified and disciplined manner. Creativity and imagination are essential to the successful fulfilment of the course's extended essay and thesis requirements.
<b>4</b>	<b>exercise independence of mind, and a readiness to challenge and criticise accepted opinion;</b>	Independence of mind and the ability to criticise received orthodoxies are fostered especially by the second year “Approaches to the History of Art” core paper, in which students are encouraged through robust class discussions and paired tutorials to evaluate established authorities both past and present, as well as less well-known trends and positions. [see item B.1 in <b>section 11</b> ] Analytical, discussion and presentation skills are coached in classes and tutorials by the lecturer and tutor, and concentrated by the submission and formative assessment of ‘written-up’ class presentations after oral feedback. These qualities are also fostered in all other options comprising the degree course.
<b>5</b>	<b>complete a thesis based on original research in the history of art.</b>	Completing the thesis involves understanding what constitutes an art-historical problem, identifying the appropriate methodological approach(es), reading relevant secondary literature, identifying primary sources (visual as well as textual), collecting information, processing it appropriately, setting out the argument and evidence coherently, and presenting it within the available time in a clearly organised format.
<p><i>Assessment:</i></p> <p><i>The formative assessment provided by weekly tutorials and class work is critical to the development and monitoring of the intellectual skills set out here. Students are subjected to regular scrutiny on these skills through oral presentations and the defence of written essay material in front of an established academic art historian and one or more of the student’s peer group in either a class or tutorial setting.</i></p>		
<b>C</b>	<b><i>Practical skills: the ability to</i></b>	<i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>write well for a variety of audiences and in a variety of contexts;</b>	Continuous and detailed individual scrutiny and commentary on written work, whether of ‘written-up’ class presentations, tutorial essays, practice examinations, or preliminary drafts of assessed extended essays and theses, aim to promote written work that is marked by well-structured and coherent arguments, in a prose that is clear, fluent and elegant.

2	<b>engage in oral discussion and argument with others, in a way that advances understanding of the questions raised and seeks to devise appropriate approaches and solutions to them;</b>	Regular paired tutorials and group classes, some of them taking place in a museum, archive or collection environment, provide ample opportunity to develop and refine high-level skills in oral discussion and presentation.
3	<b>ensure that the fullest range of evidence and opinion is brought to bear on a problem, and to develop research skills to this end, including the ability to work independently.</b>	Emphasis is placed on showing a familiarity with the variety of bibliographical resources (including library catalogues and electronic information systems) and on demonstrating an ability to identify and retrieve relevant materials (visual as well as textual) and commentaries. Students are particularly encouraged to continue questioning and redefining the already broad variety of visual and textual sources, media and types of evidence typically drawn upon in the history of art and visual culture.
<p><i>Assessment:</i></p> <p><i>Formative assessment through regular tutorial essays and class presentations enables a continuous monitoring of the development of practical oral and writing skills. Termly reports identify points of excellence and of concern, e.g., the ability to present and defend an argument or thesis convincingly and cogently both in written and in oral form. More formal assessment through termly practice examinations (known as ‘collections’) provide further opportunities to assess and provide feedback on skills associated with timed written examinations.</i></p>		
<b>D</b>	<b>Transferable skills: the ability to</b>	<i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
1	<b>find information, organise and deploy it;</b>	Information retrieval, especially through the informed use of IT, is integral to all aspects of the programme, but particularly to the thesis written in the second and third years.
2	<b>apply concepts in the analysis of art and visual culture to a wide range of empirical contexts;</b>	The development and training of general aesthetic awareness, the recognition that the shapes and appearances of things have histories and consequences, and the ability to identify and analyse these patterns and trends in both written and oral form, is central to the course. Students are encouraged to apply their scholarly knowledge and practical analytical skills to the critical understanding of the visual and material environment at large. Such ‘visual literacy’ is not only demanded by particular professions in fields associated with design and marketing or in the management of (visual and material) cultural heritage, but are also more generally valued in the culture at large, where the reproduction and use of images (including in digital form) are becoming ever more frequent.
3	<b>work well independently, with a strong sense of self-direction, but with the ability also to work constructively in co-operation with</b>	Classes, organised by the Department of the History of Art for core papers and by course convenors for optional subjects, encourage

	<b>others;</b>	collaboration amongst students, as do regular paired tutorials and group revision classes before examinations. In preparing tutorial essays, extended essays and the thesis, students will have to demonstrate independent self-motivation. Students are also expected to make the most of the university (including exhibitions and seminars/lecture series such as the History of Art Departmental Seminar, the Ashmolean Museum Seminar and the Slade Lectures) and the city's considerable, but relatively decentralised resources for visual culture, thus fostering an especially independent and self-motivated approach to personal and group organisation.
<b>4</b>	<b>effectively structure and communicate their ideas in a variety of written and oral formats;</b>	The ability to present ideas effectively and to respond to the ideas of others constructively is integral to the course. These skills are refined in the contexts of tutorials and classes, and additionally in individual presentations of research work related, respectively, to the first year extended essay and to the final year thesis.
<b>5</b>	<b>plan and organise the use of time effectively;</b>	The ability to produce material within time constraints and against tight deadlines, whether within the framework of the three-hour written examination or when preparing tutorial essays, class presentations, extended essays or theses, is essential to completing the course successfully.
<b>6</b>	<b>draw on information, and with a trained analytical intelligence, consider and solve complex problems in ways that are imaginative, yet sensitive to the needs and cultural expectations of others;</b>	These abilities are all central to the outcomes of this course. The complexities of and sensitivities embedded in the visual material produced by both past and present, as well as western and non-western cultures are especially highlighted when students explore the variety of approaches to art historical scholarship in the first year core paper "Introduction to the History of Art" and in the second year core paper "Approaches to the History of Art". [see items A.1 and B.1 in <b>section 11</b> ] In these papers, students will also consider the historical and ethical implications of the acquisition and display of artefacts and art-objects by museums and other institutions.
<b>7</b>	<b>where relevant, make appropriate use of language skills.</b>	Students have the opportunity in the more specialised options to study sources in their original language.
<p><i>Assessment:</i></p> <p><i>The transferable skills identified in above are essential elements of the programme. As such, their presence or absence is the focus of much of the regular comment provided by tutors in their weekly contacts with students and in the varying modes of formal feedback provided to students throughout the course.</i></p>		

## General teaching/learning methods and strategies

Each of the students' eleven assessed papers [i.e., four in the first year and seven in the second and third years; see **section 11** below] has a different teaching strategy. This depends in part on the nature of the subject matter, and in part on its place within the cumulative process of learning over the three years of the course. All involve the interweaving, in slightly different proportions, of three kinds of learning experience: lectures, classes and tutorials.

**1** **Lectures:** Lectures are provided by the History of Art Department to support the two core first-year papers, "Introduction to the History of Art" and "Antiquity after Antiquity" [items A.1 and A.2 in **Section 11**] and the core second year paper "Approaches to the History of Art" [item B.1 in **Section 11**]; lectures provided by the wider Faculty of History and other Faculties support the optional papers chosen by students [see items A.3, B.2, B.3., B.4, and B.5 in **Section 11**]. Their task is partly to 'package' large bodies of knowledge into a compact and coherent form that can be assimilated and easily pursued by students, and also to provoke, stimulate interest and prompt reflection. However, none of these lectures are merely 'talking text-books'. Rather, lectures provide examples of how complex materials can be organised into intellectually persuasive patterns, and so enhance the development of intellectual and practical skills. Often using slide and digital image projection, they are also one of the chief means of demonstrating 'visual reasoning' and the historical interpretation and narration of images to students.

**2** **Classes:** Classes for the full cohort of History of Art students (currently twelve students per annum) are held in the History of Art Department for the two core first-year papers, "Introduction to the History of Art" and "Antiquity after Antiquity" [items A.1 and A.2 in **Section 11**] and for the core second year paper "Approaches to the History of Art" [item B.1 in **Section 11**]. Classes of between five and sixteen students run by the Faculty of History and other Faculties are also held for the optional papers [see items A.3, B.2, B.3, B.4 and B.5 in **Section 11**]. Special classes and presentation workshops for the full cohort of History of Art students are run by the History of Art Department in preparation for writing the preliminary extended essay in the first year and the thesis in the second and third years, and will provide additional practical guidance in developing analytical and practical research and writing skills. While all learning outcomes can be enhanced by classes, they have a particular purpose in the History of Art course, since it is in making presentations to such classes, and in engaging in the discussions generated by them, that students gain their most sustained and formal experience of working co-operatively in groups.

**3** **Tutorials:** The tutorial - usually a weekly or bi-weekly meeting between one member of the academic staff who is expert in the subject matter of the paper and a pair of students, who will have prepared an essay in advance on an agreed topic from within the paper's syllabus - is at the heart of the learning experience for this course. Essays are written after the provision of a full reading list, supported by the bibliographies that are produced for each paper, and are designed to complement the lectures and classes associated with each paper (as described above). The essays are criticised rigorously and constructively in terms of substance and style through both oral and written feedback, and the themes that they raise are explored in open, in-depth discussions amongst the two students and the tutor. The tutorial is the major vehicle by which the learning outcomes of this programme are secured: the students' acquisition of knowledge and the fostering of their intellectual qualities and their practical oral and written skills. One-to-one tutorials with an appropriate expert supervisor are also provided to support students in preparing the first year preliminary extended essay, the Special Subject extended essay in the third year, and the thesis written in the second and third years [see items A.4, B.6 and B.7 in **Section 11**].

<b>11</b>	<b>Programme Structures and Features</b>	
<p>Progression through this three-year course is a process of interlinked consolidation and development. The base line is provided by student performance at the highest level prior to admission. (see <b>Section 13</b> below)</p> <p>On admission, students will have the following qualities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intellectual curiosity</li> <li>2. Conceptual clarity</li> <li>3. Flexibility (that is, the capacity to engage with alternative perspectives and/or new information)</li> <li>4. Accuracy and attention to detail</li> <li>5. Critical engagement</li> <li>6. Capacity for hard work</li> <li>7. Enthusiasm for the visual arts</li> <li>8. Evidence of the potential to develop an art historical imagination and understanding (that is, the ability to speculate about and compare images, objects and related texts, as well as the possession of appropriate cultural-historical knowledge and the capacity to deploy it).</li> </ol> <p>Drawing on and reinforcing this foundation, the course seeks to expand students' knowledge and cumulatively enhance their oral and writing skills, as well as their general intellectual qualities. Alongside a constant pattern of formative assessment, the basic rhythm of the course is provided by formal procedures of assessment at the end of the first year (the Preliminary Examination) and again at the end of the third year (the Final Honour School Examination).</p>		
<b>A</b>	<p><b><i>Learning in the first year</i></b></p> <p>Students work on four courses during the year; their performance is assessed in the Preliminary Examination at the end of the year, which includes the submission of a preliminary extended essay.</p>	
	<i>Course</i>	<i>Comment</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction to the History of Art</b>	<p>This paper seeks to broaden and deepen students' insights into the ways in one can approach and analyse visual material produced by both past and present, western and non-western cultures. The aim is to introduce students to a wider range of approaches and world cultures than is customary in most art history introductory courses, by showing how different kinds of societies and the availability of different kinds of evidence have elicited different kinds of responses from art historians both today and in the past. Relevant readings demonstrating the approaches under consideration are detailed in the paper's syllabus and bibliography.</p>

		<p>The lectures and closely-integrated classes and tutorials provide engaging examples of ‘art history in action’ and aim to equip students with skills that can be widely deployed in subsequent papers, rather than supplying a straight-forward survey or an abstract discussion of methodology. The course also will give an insight into the range of collections found in Oxford and into the varieties of expertise available, not least amongst the curatorial staff of the Ashmolean Museum and other university museums and collections.</p> <p>The course will provide an important practical and intellectual base for the extended essay [see item A.4 below], a significant project of directed research undertaken during the first year, and will enable students to begin to plot a coherent, individually-tailored course through the possibilities offered by the optional papers, extended essay and thesis in the second and third years [see items B.2, B.3, B.4, B.5-6 and B.7 below].</p>
2	<b>Antiquity after Antiquity</b>	<p>The lectures and closely-integrated classes and tutorials that make up this paper form a lively and varied alternative to the typical art historical survey, and provide more in-depth insights and more advanced tools than is possible in most introductory courses, while retaining the advantages of breadth that a traditional overview offers.</p> <p>This course is a sustained cultural history of images and reappropriations of classical Greek and Roman art in the Western tradition, from the Middle Ages to the late twentieth century. Work is focused upon a wide range of visual material and upon key writings on art by Pliny, Vasari, Winckelmann, and Gombrich. The course is supported by weekly lectures across two terms, including contributions from scholars working in diverse periods and media. Study visits to appropriate collections in Oxford and London form an integral part of the course.</p>
3	<b>European Art 1400-1800: Meaning and Interpretation</b>	<p>This paper seeks to refine skills in visual analysis by offering a varied and advanced set of tools and methods to analyse a wide-range of visual materials. The emphasis of this course lies on diverse ways of formal or structural analysis and their relation to methods of interpretation and meaning production. The closely-integrated classes and tutorials that make up this paper provide different ways of seeing or “reading” early modern European art works so as to provide a profound visual literacy in distinct media. The course will provide a foundation for further research that is going to be undertaken during the next two years of study.</p>

		The course is supported by weekly classes held in the third term which will be team-taught by members of the Department. Study visits to appropriate collections in Oxford form an integral part of the course.
4	<b>Extended Essay: Objects, Images and Buildings in Oxford</b>	This paper, submitted for assessment at the end of the first year, emphasises the importance of taking a rigorous approach to visual and textual evidence by requiring students to undertake a 5,000-word extended essay on an approved choice of building, image or object in Oxford. Students will have a series of one-to-one tutorials with an appropriate expert supervisor, who will be assigned to them based on their general area of interest by the Extended Essay Co-ordinator in the History of Art Department. The Co-ordinator also runs classes and a presentation workshop to prepare students writing preliminary extended essays by providing additional practical guidance in developing their analytical and practical research and writing skills.
<p>The courses in the first year as a whole aim to give students an understanding of the historical, analytical and critical skills necessary for the sound use of visual evidence and the critical reading of relevant texts, as well as a basic knowledge of a wide variety of images, objects and monuments.</p>		
<p><i>Assessment:</i></p> <p><i>Students' progress will be monitored continuously in their tutorials and classes. The regularity and relative informality of tutorials and classes give students easy access to assistance if they encounter academic problems. At the beginning of the second and third term, students will be set practice examinations (known as 'collections') in their colleges and in the History of Art Department on the work done in the preceding term and receive diagnostic feedback from their tutors. The examination at the end of the year on three papers (assessed via closed three-hour examinations) and the extended essay provide a sound assessment of the students' achievements and progress in the first year in relation to the Programme Learning Outcomes set out in Section 10.</i></p>		
<b>B</b>	<b>Learning in the second and third years</b>	Students work on five papers, an extended essay and a thesis in their second and third years; their progress is evaluated in an examination (the Final Honours School Examination) which assesses them via five three-hour closed examinations and two substantial pieces of written work (an extended essay and a thesis) at the end of the third year.
	<i>Course</i>	<i>Comment</i>

1	<p><b>Core Paper: Approaches to the History of Art</b></p>	<p>This paper builds on the first-year core paper “Introduction to the History of Art” [see item A.1 above]. While the “Introduction” paper explores key art historical issues and approaches through a series of case studies (‘art history in action’), the “Historiography and Methodologies” paper provides students with a more sophisticated set of methodological tools and an explicit historiographical apparatus to analyse the texts, images and objects encountered in the other Finals papers and in the writing of the extended essay and thesis. By considering carefully and critically texts by a wide variety of art historians, as well as relevant works by archaeologists, anthropologists, historians and literary critics, students gain a historiographical overview of the discipline of art history and appreciate how methodological approaches from other disciplines have been incorporated into the field.</p> <p>The paper is taught in tutorials and classes. It is additionally supported by a lecture series.</p>
2	<p><b>A Further Subject in Art History (chosen from a minimum of six art-historical Further Subjects offered by the Faculty of History and the Department of the History of Art)</b></p>	<p>Art history students join History undergraduates for this paper, which is taken in the second year and chosen from at least six art-historically oriented ‘Further Subject’ papers offered by the Faculty of History on topics ranging from the visual culture of the late classical world through that of nineteenth-century Britain.</p> <p>The papers are taught through a combination of lectures, classes and paired tutorials, with an emphasis on the use of primary visual and textual sources. These sources, together with relevant secondary readings, are detailed in the syllabuses and bibliographies produced by the convenors of the papers, who are members of the History Faculty and active researchers in related fields. The papers are designed to extend and deepen students’ understanding of particular subject areas, topics and themes with a strong visual and material-cultural component.</p> <p>Class presentations by students and discussions in classes and paired tutorials are an integral part of these papers and provide an opportunity for students to enhance their skills in working effectively as part of a group.</p>
3	<p><b>Classical, Pre-Modern or Non-Western Art Option (chosen from a minimum of seven art-historical options offered by the Faculties of Oriental Studies, and Classics, and the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology and the Department of the History of Art)</b></p>	<p>Art history students will join students from related disciplines for this paper, which is taken in the second year and chosen from at least five art-historically oriented options offered by these Faculties on topics ranging from ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman art to Islamic art and architecture.</p>

		<p>The papers are taught through a combination of lectures, tutorials and (in some cases) classes, with an emphasis on the use of primary visual and textual sources. These sources, together with relevant secondary readings, are detailed in the syllabuses and bibliographies produced by the convenors of the papers, who are members of the Oriental Studies, Archaeology and Anthropology, and Classics Faculties and active researchers in related fields.</p> <p>Like the Further Subject papers described above [see item B.2], these papers are designed to extend and deepen students' understanding of particular subject areas, topics and themes with a strong visual and material-cultural component, although the emphasis here is exclusively on the visual culture of non-western or pre-modern societies. Students engage with a range of texts and images relevant to the subject, in order to elucidate their significance and to relate them critically to the relevant secondary literature produced by art historians and scholars in other disciplines.</p>
4	<p><b>Modern Art option (chosen from a minimum of five art-historical options offered by the Department of The History of Art, the Faculties of Modern Languages, and History, the Ruskin School, and the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology)</b></p>	<p>Art history students join students from related disciplines for this paper, which is taken in the second year and chosen from a number of art-historically oriented options ranging from later 19th- and early 20th-century art and literature in Europe to film studies to contemporary art in Europe.</p> <p>The papers are taught through a combination of lectures, tutorials and (in some cases) classes, with an emphasis on the use of primary visual and textual sources. These sources, together with relevant secondary readings, are detailed in the syllabuses and bibliographies produced by the convenors of the papers, who are members of the Faculties offering the papers and active researchers in related fields.</p> <p>Like the Further Subject papers described above [see item B.2], these papers are designed to extend and deepen students' understanding of particular subject areas, topics and themes with a strong visual and material-cultural component, although the emphasis here is exclusively on images, objects, and texts produced in later 19th-, 20th- and early 21st-century cultures. Students engage with a range of texts and images relevant to the subject, in order to elucidate their significance and to relate them critically to the relevant secondary literature produced by art historians and scholars in other disciplines. Some of the options will allow students with appropriate language skills to study relevant</p>

		texts in languages other than English.
5/ 6	<b>A Special Subject Paper [item B.5] (chosen from at least four art-historical Special Subjects offered by the Faculties of History and Oriental Studies and the Department of the History of Art) and a Special Subject Extended Essay [item B.6]</b>	<p>The Special Subject paper is chosen from a range of art-historically orientated options offered by the History Faculty and the Faculty of Oriental Studies.</p> <p>As is the case in the Further Subject papers described above [see item B.2], these papers are taught through a combination of lectures, tutorials and classes, with an emphasis on the use of primary visual and textual sources. These sources, together with relevant secondary readings, are detailed in the syllabuses and bibliographies produced by the convenors of the papers, who are members of the relevant faculties and researchers in related fields.</p> <p>In the Special Subject, students study closely and critically the original sources (visual as well as textual) on which historical and art historical scholarship is based. Students construct their own understanding of the subject from this primary evidence. The Special Subject paper [item B.5] is assessed by a three-hour closed examination that requires detailed commentary on the prescribed texts and images.</p> <p>The Special Subject extended essay [item B.6], which builds on the skills developed while writing the extended essay in the first year [see item A.4 above], as well as on the work completed for the Special Subject paper, requires students to produce a 6000-word essay on a set question. The questions devised for the extended essay invite students to employ their familiarity with the Special Subject paper's set texts and images to illuminate broader issues raised by the subject. This exercise is designed to encourage students to develop practical writing and presentation techniques, to demonstrate their ability to marshal visual and textual evidence, and to sustain an argument in an extended piece of writing.</p>
7	<b>A thesis</b>	<p>The writing of a 12,000-word thesis demonstrates and further develops research and writing skills similar to those deployed in completing the extended essay in the first year [see item A.4 above] and the Special Subject extended essay in the third year [see item B.6 above], but it offers students the opportunity to undertake much more extensive primary research (visual as well as textual) on a topic of their own choosing and to work as independent art-historical scholars in their own right.</p>

		<p>Before choosing a thesis topic at the end of the second year, students will receive guidance from the Thesis Co-ordinator in the History of Art Department. Once students have selected a topic, the Thesis Co-ordinator will assign an appropriate expert adviser to each student. The adviser will meet with the student for a series of one-to-one tutorials beginning at the end of the second year and continuing into the third year, when the thesis is completed. They will assist students in focusing the work and in reviewing its progress in preparation for submission and assessment.</p>
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*Assessment:*

*As in the first year, students' progress will be monitored continuously in the second and third years through single and paired tutorials, classes, and termly practice examinations (known as 'collections') set in colleges and in the History of Art Department. Students will receive a great deal of commentary and diagnostic feedback on their contributions and performance, whether in the form of tutorial essays, oral presentations, participation in general class discussions, drafts of extended essays and theses, or practice examinations.*

*The examination at the end of the final year, which consists of five papers assessed by a closed three-hour examination, the Special Subject extended essay, and the thesis, provides a robust assessment of students' achievements and progress through the programme in relation to the Learning Outcomes discussed in Section 10. The requirement that all students undertake both a Special Subject extended essay and a thesis constitutes a particularly important component that productively widens the range of assessment methods deployed in the programme.*

12	<b>Support for students and their learning</b>	
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<b>A</b>	<p><b>Libraries</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The <b>Sackler Library</b> incorporates the History of Art Library. This large collection has particular strengths in iconography, the historiography of art, and nineteenth-century French salon criticism.</li> <li>2. The <b>Bodleian Library</b>, one of the world's greatest research libraries, has copyright holdings of nearly every secondary text that a student is likely to consult, as well as comprehensive and ancient collections of primary printed and manuscript sources. There are also particular collections of special visual interest, such as the Douce bequest of printed antiquities, the John Johnson collection of Printed Ephemera, and the Gough Collection of cartography and urban imagery.</li> <li>3. The <b>Department of the History of Art Visual Resources Centre</b> has over 170,000 images of art &amp; architecture from classical antiquity to the present day on 35 mm slides, and will lend these to students for study and research, as well as for class or tutorial presentations. It also holds several collections of photographs and postcards. There is a large and rare collection of 19th- and early 20th-century glass lantern slides, including many architectural images, with a lantern slide projector available for their display. Work is also currently underway to provide digital images for teaching and research to compliment the image databases subscribed to by the Library Services. Desktop computers and data projectors are installed in both teaching spaces for student presentations involving digital images.</li> <li>4. The <b>History Faculty Library</b> holds multiple copies on open shelves of some essential titles, and is particularly useful for historical journals and other contextual material.</li> </ol>
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	<p>5. All students are members of <b>colleges</b>, each of which has a library, usually with generous opening hours and lending policies. Although their holdings tend to vary according to established college interests and college staff's individual teaching and research areas, they are obliged to cater to their members and frequently respond to recommendations for new acquisitions. Colleges also often hold relevant archives and object collections, such as the Brocklebank Collection of Iznick pottery at Magdalen College, the Christ Church Picture Gallery, or the Worcester College collection of architectural treatises. These resources are generally open to non-members of a college with a letter of introduction from a tutor.</p>
<p><b>B</b></p>	<p><b>Museums</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The Ashmolean Museum.</b> This is a major teaching resource; several of the museum's curatorial staff also contribute to the History of Art Department lecture and seminar programmes, including providing some of the core first year lectures [see items A.1 and A.2 in section 11]. Curators serve as well as expert supervisors and advisers for the first year extended essay and the third year thesis [see items A.4 and B.7 in section 11]. The museum's permanent collections are outstanding in many areas of ancient, Western and Non-Western fine and applied arts, and it has an increasingly ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions. The Print Room welcomes students to examine individually some of the finest old master prints and drawings in the world; the museum also holds significant archives.</li> <li>2. <b>Christ Church Picture Gallery.</b> Members of this gallery's curatorial staff are actively involved in the course's teaching, research and supervision programmes. The superb collection of old master paintings, drawings and prints are an important resource available to students for study and research purposes.</li> <li>3. <b>Pitt Rivers Museum.</b> History of Art staff and students also collaborate with colleagues based in this famous ethnographic collection. Some Pitt Rivers curators will serve as expert supervisors as necessary and will assist students seeking to undertake research projects on collections in their care.</li> <li>4. <b>Museum of the History of Science.</b> Members of the Museum's staff provide important curatorial expertise and supervision for students as necessary, as well as oversee access to an important collection of images and objects.</li> <li>5. <b>Modern Art Oxford.</b> Although not officially part of the University, this museum (located within a few yards of the History of Art Department) is the most important local venue for contemporary art exhibitions and organises a stimulating programme of lectures and gallery tours by artists, critics and scholars.</li> </ol>

<p><b>C</b></p>	<p><b>IT resources</b></p> <p>There is an extensive network of IT resources and support within Oxford.</p> <p>History of Art students can use the computers in the student area of the Centre for Visual Studies, which is located in the Department, as well as the Department's photocopier, laser printer, scanner and photographic printer.</p> <p>The Department also has access to a full-time IT officer through the History Faculty and makes key information (such as admissions procedures, the student handbook, programme specifications, teaching resources etc.) available through a regularly-updated website and the History of Art area of 'WebLearn', the University's virtual learning environment.</p> <p>Colleges provide good IT resources, with Support Officers prepared to train and assist individual students as necessary. Students are given a college e-mail address upon arrival. The Oxford University Computing Services (OUCS) provide facilities for undergraduates, and a variety of training programmes, several of which are specifically geared to students in the Humanities, including the Visual Arts.</p> <p>The use of IT within the undergraduate degree course is significant and growing. Students are introduced to the bibliographic resources of the Web as part of the special classes and workshops organised in preparation for the writing of extended essays and theses. Most course bibliographies are available on the Web to enrolled students. A number of courses make substantial use of learning materials that are downloaded from the Web, including digital images; other courses direct students to such resources as alternatives to traditional library provision. Essays for class discussion are often circulated in advance as e-mail attachments and weekly information bulletins about upcoming lectures, seminars, exhibitions and other special events are sent to all History of Art students via e-mail.</p>
<p><b>D</b></p>	<p><b>Advice concerning the Syllabus</b></p> <p>Guidance on the range of options available to students in the course is readily available.</p> <p>The structure of the course, and short descriptions of its various elements, are available in the two Course Handbooks, one covering the first year's work, the other outlining the second and third year programme. These handbooks are also available on the Department of History of Art's area of WebLearn.</p> <p>Guidance concerning the syllabus and the choices offered within it is primarily provided in a more personal forum by the History of Art Undergraduate Course Co-ordinator and by individual college History of Art co-ordinators. In the latter group, there is one co-ordinator at each of the colleges which admit History of Art undergraduates. The tasks that fall to the college co-ordinators are wide-ranging, although all involve easy access and informal (but informed) discussion with individual students. College co-ordinators also have a pastoral role if students have academic or personal difficulties; they may advise on future employment (as can the university's excellent Careers Services office); but their key responsibility is to help realise the student's full intellectual potential within the course. To this end, they (in consultation with the Undergraduate Course Co-ordinator) monitor their students' progress through the syllabus, help them choose optional papers and extended essay and thesis topics and, in collaboration with the Undergraduate Course Co-ordinator, arrange the teaching for the courses that they have selected. Classes are held in the Department, designed to help students make informed choices in choosing topics for their research and writing projects.</p>

**E**

**Other support available**

The University Language Centre offers all students taught classes in general language in six modern languages, and materials for private study. In addition, the Language Centre offers a course specifically for historians and art historians in their second year: *Reading French for Historians*.

The Oxford University Counselling Service provides free, confidential support to all students.

In addition to the college History of Art co-ordinators (who will advise students in planning their overall undergraduate programme in consultation with the Undergraduate Course Co-ordinator), colleges have other support structures (pastoral as well as academic) for students. These vary from college to college, but may include the appointment of personal tutors or additional college advisers, access to college chaplains, nurses and doctors, and support structures provided via the Junior Common Room (especially the Welfare Officer).

There are complaints procedures for students within the History Faculty (which are consequently available to History of Art students), within their colleges, or via the University Proctors' Office. There is also a History of Art Department Harassment Officer. In addition, students will be able to bring queries and concerns to the attention of the Department and Faculty via their elected student representatives. There is one such representative for each cohort, who is invited to attend departmental meetings. One History of Art representative is invited to sit on the Faculty's Undergraduate Joint Consultative Committee. All this information is fully detailed in the course handbooks for first year students and for second and third year students.

13	Criteria for admission	
	A	<p><b>School/College leavers</b></p> <p>Admission to the degree is highly competitive. Applicants are asked to submit two pieces of written work: a marked essay from one of their A-level or equivalent further education courses and a brief account of no more than 750 words about their response to an item of art or design (interpreted in the broadest sense) to which they have had first-hand access. Both pieces of written work may be discussed at interview. Candidates are given two interviews, normally one with a member of the Department and a college tutor, and the other with two further college tutors. At interview, candidates also may be asked to discuss critically photographs of artefacts in order to assess applicants' ability to engage intelligently with visual culture. No specific A-levels will be required, but students will normally be expected to receive scores of AAA, with at least one A-level that demonstrates essay-writing skills, or the equivalent in other school examination systems. Recommended subjects for higher school study include Art History, History, English, and Modern or Classical Languages. If Art or Art and Design A-levels are taken, at least one other A-level involving essay-writing skills is recommended. General Studies is not accepted as an A-level subject. If AS-levels are taken, a condition would normally only be set if the subject were directly relevant to the degree, such as Art History or History. All students are required to satisfy minimum English language requirements, as defined by the University's admissions office.</p> <p>The following criteria are applied in the assessment of candidates for the B.A. (Hons) in the History of Art.</p> <p><b>General Selection Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual curiosity</li> <li>• Conceptual clarity</li> <li>• Flexibility (that is, the capacity to engage with alternative perspectives and/or new information)</li> <li>• Accuracy and attention to detail</li> <li>• Critical engagement</li> <li>• Capacity for hard work</li> <li>• Enthusiasm for the visual arts</li> <li>• Evidence of the potential to develop an art historical imagination and understanding (that is, the ability to speculate and compare, as well as the possession of appropriate cultural-historical knowledge and the capacity to deploy it)</li> </ul> <p>Candidates will be assessed against these criteria on the basis of information derived from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UCAS forms, including in particular personal statements, school reports, qualifications achieved and qualifications predicted</li> <li>• written work submitted by candidates (which includes a marked essay from one of their A-level or equivalent further education courses and a brief account of no more than 750 words about their response to an item of art or design, interpreted in the broadest sense, to which they have had first-hand access)</li> </ul>

- performance in interviews
- comparison, in all these areas, with other candidates

Every effort will be made to take into account the special needs or particular circumstances of all candidates in making judgments on these matters

Within these general criteria, the assessment of written work and interviews is guided by more specific criteria, as follows.

### **Written Work Criteria**

In grading items of submitted written work, selectors will bear in mind the criteria listed below. They will take into account the circumstances under which the work was written, in their best judgment, having regard for the information provided on any attached sheets and to comments made by teachers where these exist. Such circumstances might include the time allowed for the exercise, the level of the exercise and the resources made available to candidates.

- evidence of careful and critical reading and looking
- an analytical approach
- coherence of argument
- precision in the handling of concepts and in the evidence presented to support points
- relevance to the question, when applicable
- art historical imagination
- originality
- precision, clarity and facility of writing

### **Interviewing Criteria**

A general aim of interviews is to establish a sense of a candidate's potential for effective learning in a tutorial-based system. Within this general aim, interviews are particularly intended to inform selectors about the following abilities of candidates:

- clarity of thought and expression
- analytical ability
- flexibility
- enthusiasm and commitment
- potential to develop art historical imagination
- the use of appropriate cultural-historical knowledge (that is, demonstration by candidates that they have understood well what they have studied and, specifically, that they know about the topics explored in their written work, as well as demonstration of their ability to deploy cultural-historical evidence in support of an interpretation)

<b>B</b>	<p><b>Mature and overseas students</b></p> <p>Applicants in these groups are considered on an individual basis, but the submission of written work and its discussion in interview is equally important to the Admissions process.</p>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning</b></p>
	<p>Student feedback on lectures and seminars is requested, and the comments are reviewed by the lecturer and/or course convenor, who report to the appropriate faculty teaching committee. Students are also invited to comment, with full anonymity if they wish, on any aspects of the course for consideration by the appropriate committee of the faculty offering a particular option.</p> <p>History of Art students are able to bring queries and concerns to the attention of the History of Art Department and the History Faculty via their elected student representatives. Representatives are invited to attend the departmental meetings. A History of Art representative will also be invited to sit on the History Faculty's Undergraduate Joint Consultative Committee, which is formed by student representatives and by the officers of the Faculty. The JCC has termly meetings, at which students' opinions on new course proposals or suggested changes to the curriculum are solicited and given serious consideration.</p> <p>Student comments on tutorial provision are requested by colleges and are reviewed by each college's senior tutor.</p> <p>The BA course was the subject of a full internal Review in 2005-6. The Report was approved by the Board of the History Faculty and by the Humanities Division. The course will continue to be subject to regular review.</p> <p>Responsibility for the course is vested in the Faculty Board of History, which is part of the Humanities Division. The Humanities Divisional Board has formal responsibility for the maintenance of educational quality and standards across its subject area and exercises its responsibility through its Academic Committee and in particular through the consideration it gives to reports on examinations, course revision, and academic appointments. The Divisional Board reports to the Educational Policy and Standards Committee of the University, which ultimately approves all significant programme changes.</p> <p>All new members of the academic staff attend training sessions on teaching run by the Oxford Learning Institute and have a one-to-one session with OLI staff to assess training needs. Each lecturer is appointed an assessor who provides input into the formal review that takes place in the second and fifth years of appointment. Mentors, whose role is more informal and supportive, are also appointed for all new lecturers. Teaching is reviewed annually by two peers (including the mentor in the case of new appointees) through the History Faculty's Research Monitoring Scheme (approved by Institute for the Advancement of University Learning). The Faculty runs internal workshops on lecturing and small class teaching.</p> <p>An Inter-Faculty Committee for the History of Art, meeting termly, brings together staff from the range of University departments with a stake in the teaching of the subject. All staff involved in teaching or supervising History of Art undergraduates (including curatorial staff based in museums and libraries) are encouraged to attend appropriate seminars, workshops and/or individual training sessions organised by the Institute for the Oxford Learning Institute.</p> <p>The success rates of candidates is monitored both by the Department of the History of Art and through Examiners' Reports, and by consideration of the latter by the History of Art Teaching Committee, the History Faculty Examinations Committee, the History Faculty Board, the Divisional Board and the Educational Policy and Standards Committee of the University.</p> <p>Information is kept within the Department on the career destinations of graduates in the History of Art.</p>

The Examinations Committee of the History Faculty is responsible for establishing the marking and classification conventions for all taught degrees, including the BA (Hons) degree in the History of Art, and for publishing these. The Committee also appoints the internal Examination Boards for each of its degrees, and nominates External Examiners, who are invited to serve by the Vice-Chancellor with the Examination Boards.

Boards of Examiners, under their elected Chairs, are responsible for setting all papers, and marking the scripts of the examinees. They may appoint Assessors to assist in the setting and marking of the more specialist papers, where the subject matter is not within the expertise of two of the examiners. Each script is marked by two examiners or assessors; where their marks differ they will discuss the script to obtain an agreed mark. If they are unable to agree, a third examiner will be asked to read the script and give it a mark. After scripts have been marked, the Board of Examiners meets to classify the students in accordance with the rules established by the Examinations Committee.

A key role in this process is played by the External Examiners. They act as impartial advisors, providing the History Faculty and the University with informed comment on two major issues:

1. To verify that standards are appropriate to the award, in part by comparison with the standards of comparable institutions, and to ensure that the assessment procedures and the regulations governing them are fair and otherwise appropriate.
2. To ensure that the conduct of the examination and the determination of awards has been fairly conducted, and that individual student performance has been judged in accordance with the regulations and conventions of the Examining Board. This will entail signing the Class List as an endorsement that the processes of examination and classification have been fairly conducted.

External Examiners are expected to report to the Vice-Chancellor in each year in which they act. Their reports are expected to cover all the following points:

- the standards demonstrated by the students
- the extent to which standards are appropriate for the award
- the design, structure and marking of assessments
- the procedures for assessment and examinations
- whether or not external examiners have had sufficient access to, and the power to call upon, any material necessary to make the required judgments
- students' performance in relation to their peers in comparable courses
- the coherence of the policies and procedures relating to external examiners and their consonance with the explicit roles required of them
- the basis and rationale for any comparisons made
- the strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort
- the quality of teaching and learning which may be indicated by student performance

The Report is addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, and will be considered by the Humanities Board and by the Educational Policy and Standards Committee of the University.

The Report will also be scrutinised by the History of Art Teaching Committee, the Inter-Faculty

	<p>Committee for the History of Art, the Faculty Board of History, and the History Faculty Examinations Committee.</p> <p>Where an External Examiner's Report contains particular suggestions or criticisms, it is the responsibility of the History of Art Teaching Committee to ensure that full consideration is given to these, to institute further discussion or action, and to inform the External Examiner within a reasonable time of what is done.</p>
<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>Indicators of quality and standards</b></p>
	<p>Reports from Examining Boards and external examiners will regularly address issues relating to quality and standards.</p> <p>The History Faculty's External Advisory Panel reviews quality and standards and provides valuable feedback from the world of other academic institutions and the world of business, the museums, the professions and education.</p> <p>The directors of the BA course regularly gather feedback from undergraduates as a means to assess and improve its delivery. A less formal measure of the quality of the graduates from this programme will be the success achieved in art-historical and general aspects of the job-market, in securing training-contracts, and in admission to graduate courses in the History of Art and in other academic fields.</p>